

STATE CAPITOL
ROOM 205
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
TEL (916) 651-4006
FAX (916) 323-2263

DISTRICT OFFICE
1020 N STREET, ROOM 576
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
TEL (916) 651-1529
FAX (916) 327-8754

California State Senate

SENATOR
DARRELL STEINBERG
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
SIXTH SENATE DISTRICT

STANDING COMMITTEES:
SENATE RULES
CHAIR
APPROPRIATIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY



January 9, 2014

Honorable Stephen Reinhardt
United States Courthouse
312 North Spring Street, Suite 1747
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Lawrence K. Karlton
Robert T. Matsui United States Courthouse
501 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Thelton E. Henderson
United States District Court
450 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Letter Urging Court to Approve Two-Year Extension in Population Order

Judges Reinhardt, Karlton and Henderson:

I respectfully submit this letter in strong support of the Governor's request for a two year extension to comply with the Three-Judge Panel's overcrowding reduction order. The Governor's Budget released today reflects the State's commitment to reducing overcrowding in California's prisons through a comprehensive approach that addresses the core issues of the state's revolving prison doors.

The Governor's 2014-15 Budget proposal recognizes the efforts of Senate Democrats last year by providing nearly \$210 million in additional funding for recidivism-reduction that would otherwise not have existed but for those efforts. This includes \$81 million in the Recidivism Fund established under Senate Bill 105 to fund substance abuse treatment, services for mentally ill parolees, and new re-entry facilities in the community. The proposal also anticipates \$128 million for the California Performance Incentive Act of 2009 (S.B. 678, 2009-10 Reg. Sess. (Cal.

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2009). This is an \$86 million increase for local probation departments throughout California. In addition, the Governor's Budget proposes expanding medical parole, establishing an elderly parole program for inmates who have served at least 25 years of a sentence, and prospectively increasing credit enhancements for non-violent second strike inmates.

The Governor's Budget proposal reflects a significant move away from the failed policies of prison-building and cell-rental that do nothing to reduce recidivism or crime. Instead, it embraces an investment into the short, medium and long term strategies and policies that are proven to reduce recidivism, crime and victimization, and the prison population. This approach will deliver durable and sustainable solutions to the State's prison overcrowding and health care crisis. As we finalize the State Budget, the Senate is prepared to work closely with the Governor to ensure that these objectives are met.

Significantly, the Governor's Budget puts down an important marker that shows the State's commitment to a different and better path for managing our state's prisons. If the Court denies the request for a two-year extension, I am deeply concerned that we will lose the ground we have gained and return to an unworkable and unsustainable system of prison building. We can do better.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Court to approve a two year extension.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,


DARRELL STEINBERG
President pro Tempore

DS:aw

Cc: The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Governor of California